

JS 44 (Rev. 06/17)

**CIVIL COVER SHEET**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

**I. (a) PLAINTIFFS**

Joseph McConnell

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Philadelphia

(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)  
 Jordan Strokovsky, Esquire, McEldrew Young, 123 S. Broad Street,  
 Suite 2250, Philadelphia, PA 19109; 215-545-8800

**DEFENDANTS**The City of Philadelphia, Phila Police Officer Michael Spicer;  
Phila Police Officer Perry Betts, et alCounty of Residence of First Listed Defendant Philadelphia

(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF  
THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

**II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant
- ☐ 3 Federal Question  
(U.S. Government Not a Party)
- ☐ 4 Diversity  
(Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

**III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES** (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- |   | PTF                        | DEF                        |   | PTF                        | DEF                        |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Citizen of This State                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Citizen of Another State                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

**IV. NATURE OF SUIT** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES	
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act <input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act <input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) <input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits <input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract <input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane <input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander <input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury <input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability <b>PERSONAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud <input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending <input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage <input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 <input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other <b>LABOR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act <input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Management Relations <input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act <input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act <input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation <input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act <b>IMMIGRATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application <input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 <input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 <b>PROPERTY RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights <input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent <input type="checkbox"/> 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application <input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark <b>SOCIAL SECURITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff) <input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923) <input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) <input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI <input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g)) <b>FEDERAL TAX SUITS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) <input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act <input type="checkbox"/> 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) <input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment <input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust <input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking <input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation <input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit <input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV <input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions <input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts <input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters <input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act <input type="checkbox"/> 896 Arbitration <input type="checkbox"/> 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision <input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
<b>REAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation <input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment <input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land <input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<b>CIVIL RIGHTS</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting <input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other <input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education	<b>PRISONER PETITIONS</b> <b>Habeas Corpus:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 463 Alien Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence <input type="checkbox"/> 530 General <input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty <b>Other:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other <input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition <input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement			

**V. ORIGIN** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding
- ☐ 2 Removed from State Court
- ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
- ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened
- ☐ 5 Transferred from Another District (specify)
- ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
- ☐ 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

**VI. CAUSE OF ACTION**

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):

42 U.S.C. Sections 1331 and 1343(1), (3), (4)

Brief description of cause:

Civil Rights

**VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:**
☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.

 DEMAND \$  
 400,000.00

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☒ Yes ☐ No**VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY**

(See instructions):

JUDGE

DOCKET NUMBER

DATE

06/19/2019

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT #

AMOUNT

APPLYING IFP

JUDGE

MAG. JUDGE

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

DESIGNATION FORM

(to be used by counsel or pro se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar)

Address of Plaintiff: 4119 Howell Street, Philadelphia, PA 19135  
 Address of Defendant: 1515 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102  
 Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: 4119 Howell Street, Philadelphia, PA

**RELATED CASE, IF ANY:**

Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Terminated: \_\_\_\_\_

Civil cases are deemed related when **Yes** is answered to any of the following questions:

- |  |                              |  |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier numbered case pending or within one year previously terminated action of this court? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights case filed by the same individual?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case ☐ is / ☒ is not related to any case now pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court except as noted above.

DATE: 6/19/18 Jordan Strakovsky 318811  
 Attorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)

**CIVIL: (Place a ✓ in one category only)**

**A. Federal Question Cases:**

- ☐ 1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts
- ☐ 2. FELA
- ☐ 3. Jones Act-Personal Injury
- ☐ 4. Antitrust
- ☐ 5. Patent
- ☒ 6. Labor-Management Relations
- ☒ 7. Civil Rights
- ☐ 8. Habeas Corpus
- ☐ 9. Securities Act(s) Cases
- ☐ 10. Social Security Review Cases
- ☐ 11. All other Federal Question Cases

(Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Diversity Jurisdiction Cases:**

- ☐ 1. Insurance Contract and Other Contracts
- ☐ 2. Airplane Personal Injury
- ☐ 3. Assault, Defamation
- ☐ 4. Marine Personal Injury
- ☐ 5. Motor Vehicle Personal Injury
- ☐ 6. Other Personal Injury (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 7. Products Liability
- ☐ 8. Products Liability – Asbestos
- ☐ 9. All other Diversity Cases

(Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**ARBITRATION CERTIFICATION**

(The effect of this certification is to remove the case from eligibility for arbitration.)

I, Jordan Strakovsky, counsel of record or pro se plaintiff, do hereby certify:

- ☒ Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, § 3(c) (2), that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case exceed the sum of \$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs:
- ☒ Relief other than monetary damages is sought.

DATE: 6/19/18 [Signature] 318811  
 Attorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)

NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if there has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.



**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM**

**GAM**

v.

CIVIL ACTION

**18 2557**

NO.

In accordance with the Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan of this court, counsel for plaintiff shall complete a Case Management Track Designation Form in all civil cases at the time of filing the complaint and serve a copy on all defendants. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reverse side of this form.) In the event that a defendant does not agree with the plaintiff regarding said designation, that defendant shall, with its first appearance, submit to the clerk of court and serve on the plaintiff and all other parties, a Case Management Track Designation Form specifying the track to which that defendant believes the case should be assigned.

**SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CASE MANAGEMENT TRACKS:**

- (a) Habeas Corpus – Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255. ( )
- (b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits. ( )
- (c) Arbitration – Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2. ( )
- (d) Asbestos – Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos. ( )
- (e) Special Management – Cases that do not fall into tracks (a) through (d) that are commonly referred to as complex and that need special or intense management by the court. (See reverse side of this form for a detailed explanation of special management cases.)
- (f) Standard Management – Cases that do not fall into any one of the other tracks. ( )

<u>6/19/18</u>	<u>Jordan Strokovsky, Esquire</u>	<u>Joseph McConnell</u>
Date	Attorney-at-law	Attorney for
<u>215-545-9800</u>	<u>215-545-8805</u>	<u>jordan@mceldredynyoung.com</u>
Telephone	FAX Number	E-Mail Address

(Civ. 660) 10/02

**JUN 19 2018**

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

<b>Joseph McConnell</b>	:	
<b>Plaintiff</b>	:	<b>JURY TRIAL</b>
<b>vs.</b>	:	<b>DEMAND</b>
<b>THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, PHILADELPHIA</b>	:	
<b>POLICE OFFICER MICHAEL SPICER;</b>	:	
<b>PHILADELPHIA POLICE OFFICER PERRY</b>	:	<b>C.A. #</b>
<b>BETTS,</b>	:	
<b>Individually and in their capacity as police officers;</b>	:	
<b>and JOHN DOE DEFENDANTS 1-10.</b>	:	
<b>Defendants.</b>	:	
	:	

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**COMPLAINT**

**I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

1. Plaintiff brings this action under 42 U.S.C. §1983 seeking redress for the extraordinary misconduct of Philadelphia police officers who used improper and unconstitutional means to secure search warrants by deception and misrepresentation, search persons and property, and subject citizens to unlawful arrest, detention and prosecution. The actions and conduct of the Defendant police officers were the result of policies, practices, customs, and deliberate indifference on the part of Defendant City of Philadelphia, including the failure to take disciplinary and remedial action against the Defendant officers and other Philadelphia police officers despite documented records of misconduct and abuses of authority.

**II. JURISDICTION**

2. This action is brought pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1343(1), (3), (4)

and the aforementioned statutory provision.

### **III. PARTIES**

3. Plaintiff, Joseph McConnell is an adult male who was at all times a resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

4. Defendant City of Philadelphia is a City of the First Class in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and at all times relevant hereto operated under the color of state law in creating and maintaining a Police Department, was the employer of all Defendants and had the responsibility of adopting policies, implementing procedures and practices which would create an environment whereby citizens would be safe from police abuse.

5. Defendant Spicer was at all times relevant to this Complaint, a police officer for the City of Philadelphia and acting under the color of state law. He is being sued in both his individual and official capacities.

6. Defendant Betts was at all times relevant to this Complaint a police officer for the City of Philadelphia and acting under the color of state law. He is being sued in both his individual and official capacities.

7. John Doe Defendants 1-10 were at all times relevant to this Complaint police officers for the City of Philadelphia and acting under the color of state law. Once discovery commences and they are identified, as certainly more were involved in Plaintiff's unlawful arrest and conviction, they are being sued in both his individual and official capacities.

#### IV. FACTS

8. For more than twenty years, Philadelphia police officers assigned to various narcotics units have engaged in a pattern and practice of securing search warrants based on fraud and misrepresentation, the misuse of informants, the improper execution of search warrants, the falsification of evidence, the destruction and theft of personal property, and related misconduct.

9. The City of Philadelphia has failed to take appropriate remedial measures to prevent misconduct of this nature.

10. In or around August of 2006, Defendants Spicer and Betts, members of the Narcotics Field Unit allegedly received information from a confidential source regarding narcotic activity in the area of a family tavern by 4119 Howell Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

11. Because of this "confidential source" and alleged observations by the Defendant Officers, a search and seizure warrant was prepared and executed at 4119 Howell Street. (This information is contained in the preliminary hearing transcript for this underlying criminal case.)

12. Joseph McConnell was arrested on 8/24/06 and charged with Manufacture, Delivery, or Possession with Intent to Manufacture or Deliver.

13. He pled guilty before the Honorable Thomas Dempsey and on 4/25/08 was sentenced to 2 to 4 years confinement.

14. Critical police officers in the instant case were Michael Spicer and Perry Betts, *inter alia*. All were indicted by the federal government on July 30, 2014 and charged with robbery, falsification of records, RICO and related crimes.

15. Nonetheless, Plaintiff was in prison for over two years.

16. The Defender's Association filed a petition to reopen Plaintiff's convictions.

17. On May 18, 2018, a decade after his sentence was declared, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and the Honorable Sheila Woods-Skipper agreed that Plaintiff's conviction was improper.

18. As such, on the same day, the conviction was re-opened and dismissed, and the District Attorney's Office's Motion to nolle prosequere all charges were granted.

19. Said Order is attached hereto as Exhibit "1".

20. Plaintiff's initial guilty plea and confinement was substantially caused by the testimony and findings of lying, cheating, outlaw Defendant Officers.

21. As a direct and proximate result of the actions of all Defendants, Plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer physical and psychological harms, pain and suffering, over two years of confinement, damage to reputation, some or all of which may be permanent, as well as financial losses.

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22. The Defendant officers, acting in concert and conspiracy, caused the Plaintiff to be unlawfully arrested, subjected to false criminal charges, malicious prosecution and prolonged incarceration by falsifying information in the search warrant affidavit, the preliminary hearing and all other related paperwork; failing to disclose to prosecutors the fact that the information provided to the judicial officer in support of the search warrant was false and misleading, the information in supporting police documents was false and misleading; fabricating evidence to support the claim that the Plaintiff was involved in criminal activity, and failing to disclose other exculpatory evidence regarding these criminal charges.

23. The only evidence leading to Plaintiff's conviction was derived from the false and misleading information provided by the Defendant officers.

24. Plaintiff's arrest, detention and malicious prosecution was unlawful.

25. The unlawful arrest, detention and malicious prosecution in this case were the direct result of all Defendants' pattern, practice and custom of subjecting citizens such as the Plaintiff to arrest, prosecution and incarceration in the absence of probable cause.

26. The Defendant officers acted willfully, deliberately, maliciously or with reckless disregard of the Plaintiff's constitutional and statutory rights.



27. Defendant City of Philadelphia has failed to properly discipline the Defendant officers and other officers in the Police Department (among other things) in cases involving violations of rights of civilians, including cases of improper searches, seizures, arrests, and prosecutions, thereby causing the violations in this case.

28. The above described actions of all of the Defendants caused the violations of the Plaintiff's rights under the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment as alleged in this Complaint.

**FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION  
FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

29. The allegations set forth in paragraphs 1-28 inclusive, are incorporated herein as if fully set forth.

30. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' above described unlawful and malicious conduct, committed under the color of state law, and while acting in that capacity, the Defendants deprived Plaintiff of the equal protection of the laws and Plaintiff's rights, privileges and immunities under the laws and the Constitution of the United States. Plaintiff's right to be free from false arrest, false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, to be secure in one's person and property, to access to the Courts, and to due process and equal protection of the law, all to Plaintiff's great detriment and loss. As a result, Plaintiff suffered grievous harm, in violation of his rights under the laws and Constitution of the United States in particular the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments thereof, and 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

31. As a direct and proximate result of the acts and omissions of Defendants, Plaintiff was forced to endure great pain and mental suffering, and was deprived of physical liberty, all to Plaintiff's great detriment and loss.

32. The City of Philadelphia permitted, encouraged, tolerated, ratified and was deliberately indifferent to a pattern, practice and custom of:

- a. Unjustified, unreasonable and illegal use of process by police officers;
- b. Abuse of police powers, including false arrest, malicious prosecution, harassment and improper searches;
- c. Misrepresenting facts in order to establish probable cause where none would otherwise exist;
- d. Arresting and incarcerating citizens without probable cause solely for the purpose of committing citizens to prison with no intention of seeking criminal prosecutions;
- e. Psychologically or emotionally unfit persons serving as police officers; and
- f. Failure of police officers to prevent, deter, report or take action against the unlawful conduct of police officers under such circumstances as presented herein.

33. Defendant City of Philadelphia has encouraged, tolerated, ratified and has been deliberately indifferent to the following patterns, practices and customs and to the need for more or different training, supervision, investigation or discipline in the areas of:

- a. Unlawful detentions and unlawful arrests by police officers;
- b. The proper exercise of police powers, including but not limited to the use of false information to obtain search warrants, fabrication of evidence, unlawful arrest, malicious prosecution and unlawful detention;
- c. The monitoring of officers whom it knew or should have known were suffering from emotional and/or psychological problems that impaired their ability to function as officers;
- d. The failure to identify and take remedial or disciplinary action against police officers who were the subject of prior civilian or internal complaints of misconduct;
- e. Police officers' use of their status as police officers to employ the use of unlawful search and/or arrest, or to achieve ends not reasonably related to their police duties;

- f. Police officers' use of their status as police officers to employ the use of unlawful arrest, invoke the Code of Silence, or to achieve ends not reasonably related to police duties;
- g. The failure of police officers to follow established policies, procedures, directives and instructions regarding the securing of search warrants and the use of arrest powers under such circumstances as presented in this case;
- h. The refusal of police officers to intervene when other officers violate the rights of citizens in their presence;
- i. The failure to identify and take remedial or disciplinary action against units of officers assigned to narcotics investigations in light of repeated instances of misconduct over a period of many years as alleged in this Complaint; and
- j. The refusal of police officers to report or provide information concerning the misconduct of other police officers, a custom or practice known as the "Code of Silence."

34. Defendant City of Philadelphia failed to properly train, supervise or discipline officers assigned to narcotics units of the Philadelphia Police Department who have engaged over a period of many years in systematic abuses of authority, including but not limited to: (a) the duty to provide only truthful information in securing search and arrest warrants, (b) the duty to ensure that relationships and dealings with confidential informants are in accord with Police Department policy and constitutional commands, (c) the duty to disclose exculpatory evidence in criminal cases, (d) their duty not to undertake arrests in the absence of lawful grounds, (e) the duty to provide accurate and truthful information to the prosecutor's office, (f) the duty to report and disclose misconduct and illegal actions of other police officers, (g) the improper execution of search warrants, and in particular prohibitions on searches that go beyond those authorized by the warrant, and/or involve the destruction or theft of property or evidence, and (h) the fabrication of evidence against an accused to justify their illegal actions and conduct.

35. Defendant City of Philadelphia failed to properly sanction or discipline officers, who are aware of and conceal and/or aid and abet violations of constitutional rights of individuals by other Philadelphia Police Officers, thereby causing and encouraging Philadelphia police, including the Defendant officers in this case, to violate the rights of citizens such as the Plaintiff.

36. Defendant City of Philadelphia is deliberately indifferent to the need to train, supervise and discipline police officers. The Internal Affairs Division (IAD of the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD fails to provide an internal disciplinary mechanism that imposes meaningful disciplinary and remedial actions in the following respects:

- a. There are excessive and chronic delays in resolving disciplinary complaints;
- b. There is a lack of consistent, rational and meaningful disciplinary and remedial actions;
- c. There is a failure to effectively discipline substantial numbers of officers who were found to have engaged in misconduct.
- d. The PPD's internal investigatory process has fallen below accepted practices and is arbitrary and inconsistent;
- e. The PPD discipline, as practiced, is incident based rather than progressive. Thus, repeat violators are not being penalized in proportion to the number of violations.
- f. The conduct of IAD investigations demonstrates that PPD internal affairs personnel are not adequately trained and supervised in the proper conduct of such investigations;
- g. A global analysis of IAD's investigatory procedures indicates a pattern of administrative conduct where the benefit of the doubt is given to the officer rather than the complainant;
- h. There are serious deficiencies in the quality of IAD investigations and the validity of the IAD findings and conclusions;
- i. The PPD lacks an effective early warning system to identify, track and monitor "problem" officers.
- j. Despite the fact that several of the Defendant officers had amassed an exceptionally large number of serious misconduct complaints, the officers stayed well below the radar of an early warning system;
- k. Despite numerous prior complaints against several of the Defendant officers, the PPD took no meaningful disciplinary or remedial actions;

- l. Despite numerous prior complaints against several of the Defendant officers, the PPD took no meaningful steps to more closely monitor, retrain and supervise the officers;
- m. IAD frequently fails to interview available eyewitnesses to incidents involving citizen complaints of misconduct. The interviews that are conducted by IAD are below acceptable standards of police practice and fail to address key issues in the cases; and
- n. IAD fails to acknowledge the disproportionate and extreme use of force used by police officers in the investigation of citizen complaints and fails to properly categorize the police officers' misconduct in those cases as an impermissible use of force.

37. The City of Philadelphia was deliberately indifferent to the need for more or different training, supervision, investigation or discipline in the areas of:

- a. Use of information in obtaining probable cause;
- b. Exercise of police powers;
- c. Police officers with emotional or psychological problems;
- d. Police officers use of their status as police officers to have persons falsely arrested and maliciously prosecution and unlawfully searched or to achieve ends not reasonably related to their police duties; and
- e. False arrest, malicious prosecution and evidence planting of citizens.

38. The City of Philadelphia failed to properly sanction or discipline officers, who are aware of and conceal and/or aid and abet violations of constitutional rights of citizens by other police officers, thereby causing and encouraging police officers, including Defendant Police Officers Monaghan, Reynolds, Sinclair, Gessner, Kelly and former Police Officer Walker in this case, to violate the rights of citizens such as Plaintiff.

39. The City of Philadelphia failed to properly sanction or discipline officers and acquiesced to the Defendant officers' unlawful conduct after becoming aware that these particular officers engaged in the aforementioned conduct in cases dating back to 2002 while concealing and/or aiding and abetting in the violations of constitutional rights of citizens by these police officers, thereby causing and encouraging police



officers, including Defendant officers in this case, to violate the rights of citizens such as Plaintiff.

40. The City of Philadelphia was aware and was deliberately indifferent to the unconstitutional acts and omissions of the Defendant officers when:

- a. Beginning in 2001, several legal complaints alleging civil and constitutional rights of false arrests, malicious prosecutions, falsifying documents and testimony alleging the violations of the constitutional rights of citizens by the Defendant officers were filed;
- b. In 2005, former Philadelphia Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson testified at trial in the case of *Arnold Randall v City of Philadelphia, et al.*, C.A. No. 04-1081 regarding the customs, policies and procedures with respect to the narcotics units generally and specifically with regards to allegations that the Defendant officers engaged in false arrests, malicious prosecutions and fabrication of evidence;
- c. In 2005, IAD was authorized by the City of Philadelphia to investigate the numerous allegations of false arrests, malicious prosecution and fabrication claims against the Defendant officers, as well as other members of the narcotics units;
- d. In 2005 and later, the Philadelphia City Solicitor's Office was authorized by the City of Philadelphia to investigate the numerous allegations of false arrests, malicious prosecution and fabrication claims against the Defendant officers, as well as other members of the narcotics units;
- e. The City of Philadelphia was also aware that the federal authorities were investigating these same Defendant officers for several years for the violations of citizens' civil and constitutional rights during this period of time;
- f. In 2007, the City of Philadelphia was aware of the constitutional violations by these same officers and other officers in the narcotics units when the Third Circuit Court of Appeals denied the Defendant officers claim of Qualified Immunity due to their unlawful and unconstitutional actions in a case averring the same claims as this case – false arrest, malicious prosecution and falsification of documents. *See Andre Blaylock v City of Philadelphia, et al.* 504 F.3d 405 (3d Cir. 2007); and
- g. In December 2012, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office informed Philadelphia Police Commissioner Ramsey that the Defendant officers would no longer be permitted to be witnesses in narcotic cases.

41. Defendant City of Philadelphia continued to permit, acquiesce, encourage, tolerate, ratify and has been deliberately indifferent to the unconstitutional acts and

omissions by the Defendant officers despite the aforementioned allegations, investigations and Court holdings for years.

42. The foregoing acts, omissions, systemic deficiencies and deliberate indifference to the danger or harm to citizens like the Plaintiff and the need for more or different training, investigation and discipline are policies and customs of the City of Philadelphia and have caused police officers, including Defendant Police Officers in this case, to believe that they can violate the rights of citizens, with impunity, including the use of fraud and falsehood and to believe that such conduct would be honestly and properly investigated, all with the foreseeable result that officers are more likely to violate the constitutional rights of citizens.

43. The actions of all Defendants, acting under the color of state law and/or in concert or conspiracy with each other, deprived Plaintiff of his rights, privileges and immunities under the laws and Constitution of the United States, in particular, the rights to be secure in one's person and property, to be free from unlawful searches, from false arrest, malicious prosecution and to due process of law.

44. Defendants, City of Philadelphia and Defendant Police Officers Spicer and Betts, acting in concert and conspiracy with each other, have by the aforementioned actions deprived Plaintiff of his constitutional and statutory rights.

45. By these actions, all Defendants have deprived Plaintiff of his rights secured by the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

### **PUNITIVE DAMAGES**

46. Plaintiff re-alleges paragraphs 1-45 of this complaint as though fully set forth herein.

47. The conduct of Defendant Police Officers were outrageous, malicious, wanton, willful, reckless and intentionally designed to inflict harm upon Plaintiff.

48. As a result of the acts of Defendant Police Officers, Plaintiff is entitled to punitive damages as to each cause of action.

### **JURY DEMAND**

49. Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to each Defendant and as to each count.

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff requests the following relief:

(1) Compensatory damages (including prior attorney fees and court costs); (2) Reasonable Attorney's Fees and Costs; (3) Punitive damages; (4) A Declaratory Judgment that Defendants' Conduct and Policies Are Unlawful; and (5) All Other Just and Equitable Relief That the Court May Award.

DATED: June 18, 2018

/s/Jordan Strokovsky  
JORDAN STROKOVSKY  
123 S. Broad Street, Ste 2250  
Philadelphia, PA 19109  
jordan@mceldrewwyoung.com  
Pa Bar No: 318811  
Counsel for Plaintiff

**DEFENDER ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA**

**BY: Keir Bradford-Grey, Defender and**

Bradley S. Bridge and Shonda Williams

Identification No. 00001

1441 Sansom Street

Philadelphia, PA 19102

(215) 568-3190

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA : THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
: CRIMINAL TRIAL DIVISION

: CP-51-CR-0012942-2007

VS.

: CHARGES: PWID and related charges

Joseph McConnell

PP#852454

ORDER

AND NOW, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2018, upon examination of the Motion For A New Trial Based Upon After Discovered Evidence; Alternatively, For Post-Conviction Collateral Relief, Or Alternatively, For Writ Of Habeas Corpus, it is HEREBY ORDERED and DECREED, that a new trial is granted.

The District Attorney's motion to *nolle prosequere* all the charges under that court number is granted.



I HEREBY CERTIFY the foregoing to be  
a true and correct copy of the original  
order as filed in this  
office:

Date: 5/18/18  
Am

Office of Judicial Records  
Criminal Motion Court Clerk  
First Judicial District of Pa.

